

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Monday, November 20, 1972

[The House met at 2:30 pm.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair.]

POINT OF INFORMATION

MR. SPEAKER:

If I might just have hon. members' attention for a moment, the sound operator is unavoidably absent, it being somewhat difficult to be married in the sound booth! We have a replacement sound operator and if hon. members find when they speak that they are not coming through the sound system, I'm sure the Hansard staff would be grateful if they were to repeat their opening words so that they can be recorded.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER:

In the matter of petitions, if I might have the attention of the House for another moment, the hon. Member for Calgary McCall asked and was given the informal approval of the House to table a certain petition which is to be referred to the government. I have only one copy. It doesn't lend itself to further copying and with the leave of the House might it be removed from the Table so that this copy could go to the government?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to advise the House of two new motions of a procedural nature which will be distributed to the House this afternoon, and because they relate to Government Motion No. 4, which is that calling for receipt and concurrence of the Committee on Privileges and Elections, I have arranged to have them distributed to the hon. members this afternoon. These two motions and those two, plus Motion No. 4, may be considered tomorrow and essentially would enable the House to make known its decision on the question of the subjects raised in the Privileges and Elections Report. The Legislative Counsel and the Clerk has advised me that the motion standing on the Order Paper wouldn't be sufficient for the House to make changes if it wished to do so. These two motions are essentially the two parts of section (d) in the committee report, one being permanent amendments to the rules, and the other being sessional orders. So we will have those distributed this afternoon in the event we move to them tomorrow.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. SPEAKER:

We are honoured in having with us this afternoon, the Honourable Gordon Dowding, the Speaker of the British Columbia Legislature, accompanied by Mr. George MacMinn, the Clerk Assistant of the British Columbia Legislature. I would ask them if they might rise to be recognized by the House.

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this assembly the Honourable Brenda Mary Robertson. She is the Minister of Youth and Social Services for the Province of New Brunswick. I

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would like the Honourable Brenda Robertson to stand and be recognized by this assembly.

MR. CHAMBERS:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you and on your behalf to the members of this assembly 60 enthusiastic Grade VI students from Scott Robertson Elementary School, which is located in the Edmonton Calder constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers, Miss Wilkinson, Mr. Otto, and Mr. Goebel. I'd like to congratulate them all for the interest they have shown in the proceedings of this House. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would now ask the students and teachers to rise and be recognized by the members.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to introduce to you and on your behalf to the hon. members 13 Girl Guides from the 102nd Guide Company. They come from the community of Rosslyn, which is also in the Calder constituency. In addition to learning more about the procedures of the House, the girls, through attending here, hope to complete the requirements for their citizenship badge. They are accompanied by Mrs. Field, the District Commissioner of the Lawrie Ross Guide District; by Mrs. Stephens, the captain of the 65th Guide Company; and by their captain, Mrs. Fedorak. The girls are seated in the members' gallery, and I would like to ask the guides and their leaders to stand and be recognized.

FILING RETURNS AND TABLING REPORTS

Status of Women

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to table a report on the Status of Women in Alberta. This report, Mr. Speaker, was compiled by the Citizens' Advisory Committee which was appointed to report to the government on the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and how it pertained to the women of Alberta. After they had received submissions and briefs for about a year, we decided it would be a good time, perhaps, to draw up a balance sheet. Because of the wide interest throughout Alberta on the status of women, we have published this report. There are copies for the members as well; a copy of the report will go to each person or group which made submissions to the committee, and to all women's groups throughout Alberta.

Early Childhood Education

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a report entitled, "Opportunities for Infants," a policy paper prepared for the government by L. W. Downey Research Associates Ltd. It represents a review of research in the field of early childhood education. It is something in the way of a sequel to investigations and reviews that were done by the Human Resources Research Council in this area about a year ago.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, followed by the hon. Member for Camrose.

DREE

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Has the government been advised by DREE yet with respect to the proposed rapeseed crushing plant in High Prairie?

MR. GETTY:

No, Mr. Speaker, they have not.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, has the government made any effort in the last several months to find out from the federal department what their decision is with respect to the construction of this plant? It's my understanding that the application has, in fact, been turned down.

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MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, we have heard rumours to that effect. As a matter of fact, in an industrial development nature, the Department of Regional Economic Expansion has not been a department which has co-operated with the provincial governments because that is not an arrangement where they consult with the provinces. Nevertheless we have made every effort to stay on top of this situation. The hon. Minister of Agriculture has also been working on it; if he wants to add anything to Hansard he may do it now.

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, the only addition I can add is that, as I understand it, I haven't had anything official except from the people who propose to build it, that in fact they couldn't meet the very stringent requirements that DREE imposed upon them, but they are now going to make application to other areas for funds.

MR. NOTLEY:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Has the provincial government any contingency plans with respect to encouraging the construction of a rapeseed crushing plant in the Peace River country?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, as I have said in this House before, we have a number of contingency plans for developing processing of agricultural products throughout Alberta. In conjunction with my colleague in the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, we are now looking at more than one proposition for rapeseed crushers throughout Alberta.

MR. NOTLEY:

A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. Since the change in government in British Columbia, has your government made any representation to the government in B.C. with respect to making a joint submission to Ottawa dealing with the incentive scheme for northern Alberta and British Columbia?

By way of explanation, you are probably aware of the fact that the former government was making a submission of northern B.C. --

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is entitled to ask for rather than give information.

MR. GETTY:

I think I know what he is trying to get at. Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta has been in pretty constant negotiation with the Department of Regional and Economic Expansion regarding a new way of handling that department's operations within the province. We were aware that British Columbia intended to try to have some new incentive area in northern British Columbia, and since that might be in northeastern British Columbia, it could come up against the boundary of Alberta and therefore that boundary then might stop the area that B.C. was trying to develop. Then people on the Alberta side would be unable to compete because they would be dealing against an incentive area with the special grants and so on that that entails.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, it has been our contention that the establishing of areas -- which is taking a pencil and drawing a line around some part of your province -- is not a satisfactory way for the Department of Regional and Economic Expansion to operate in Alberta. The minute you make that arbitrary line you allow those people inside some advantages, yes, but those who do not get included have suffered just as greatly from the disadvantage of being no longer able to compete, because of that arbitrary line. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we are negotiating with DREE and have made the proposition to them that we would like them to try and work with us, to come up with an operating agreement which will allow them still to fulfill the objectives of that department -- which is to help unemployment, and help to develop slow growth areas in the province. We think we have progressed considerably. I am hopeful that we are now going to be able to have an arrangement with the Department of Regional and Economic Expansion assuming that the cabinet changes, which may come in the federal government, will not change that minister, and if they do we may have to reassess our situation. I am hopeful that we will be able to come to an

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agreement with DREE whereby there will not necessarily be areas arbitrarily drawn in Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Camrose followed by the hon. Opposition House Leader.

Quarantine of Imported Cattle

MR. STROMBERG:

Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Due to the backlog of permits for importing of cattle by Alberta breeders, would you request the Veterinary General of Canada to increase the capacity of the quarantine stations in eastern Canada and also in Alberta?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, as outlined in the spring session in relation to the quarantine station at Ellerslie. This is a medium security station and no cattle from countries in which hoof and mouth disease is endemic are allowed into it. Therefore that restricts the importing of cattle from continental Europe to the Quarantine Station at Grosse Ile another way, or in through extended quarantine on the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. So that we are restricted by the number of cattle that can be held in quarantine in Grosse Ile to those coming in from areas in which hoof and mouth disease is endemic. I would like to re-emphasize that the station in Alberta does not accept cattle from those countries in which there is hoof and mouth disease. And this is very important to our cattle industry in Alberta.

MR. STROMBERG:

Supplementary, is there a backlog at the Ellerslie station for permits on the number of cattle that can be handled?

DR. HORNER:

This, of course, is strictly a federal quarantine station and I am not aware that there is. We had the first plane loads of Australian cattle coming into Ellerslie a short time ago, the Murray Grey breed and some Shorthorns. This will be primarily used, as I understand it, as a station to import cattle from those countries that don't have hoof and mouth, as a collecting station, and as a quarantine station for our use and the export of our cattle around the world.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Opposition House Leader followed by the hon. Member for Calgary McCall.

Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I direct a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Has the Alberta government accepted or does it accept the concept of a prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute?

DR. HORNER:

No final decision has been made on that, Mr. Speaker. In relation to a farm machinery institute we are waiting to get a reaction from the federal government as to whether or not they would play a part in the substantial capital costs that are involved and also whether or not they would play a part in the operating costs. Representations have been to the Ministry of Science under the hon. Mr. Gillespie to the Ministry of Agriculture, and also to the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board. We haven't had any response to a joint submission made by the three prairie provinces to the federal government in relation to this information.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the hon. minister would advise the House why machine companies should not be fully responsible for research and improving the design of farm machinery.

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DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that they should be fully responsible, but it is also a matter of making sure that the design that they come up with is suitable for our particular needs. I think that the argument, of course, is that these large international machine companies develop machines for a variety of uses and for use in a variety of countries of the world. We have to protect our own industry and our own farmers to make sure that in fact the machines are suitable for agricultural purposes within Alberta and within western Canada. We have had some pretty glaring examples when this wasn't the case. A machine was fine for other places and other uses, but didn't in fact do the job here. That is all part of the argument as to whether or not you should in fact have farm machinery testing under government supervision or otherwise, and will be part of the continuing input, I would hope, from a variety of sources that will come to us in relation to whether or not we should go ahead. But one of the first things we had to have was a response from the federal government in relation to costs.

MR. TAYLOR:

One more supplementary if I may, Mr. Speaker. Would the establishment of the institute in addition to carrying out the work of adaptability in climatic conditions etc., reduce the price of farm machinery to our farmers?

DR. HORNER:

Well, there are a number of ways in which a good machinery institute, in my view, could in fact reduce the price to farmers. One of the very glaring examples of course, is standardization of attachment parts, particularly in relation to hydraulic couplings and in relation to nuts and bolts even. These are becoming a major cost input in farming in Alberta and are one of the areas in which we think substantial savings might be had-- to get the machine companies to standardize more and more, particularly the attachment parts in relation to their machinery.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary McCall followed by the hon. Member for Little Bow.

District Nursing Home Boards

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Will the granting of approvals for new nursing home construction and developments in this province -- which is now the responsibility of district boards, to recommend such approvals -- be circumvented and the responsibility for recommending such approvals be taken away from district boards?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, no change in policy in regard to the role of the district nursing home boards is intended at the present time.

MR. HO LEM:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Are there any reasons given at the present time to award such a change in the present policy?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I don't know in the sense of reasons given, I supposed in the course of debate or discussion people can raise things like that. I have no representations officially before me at the present time that give suggestions along those lines.

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, one final supplementary question. Will the hon. minister agree that the present policy encouraged local autonomy and participation, and because of this it would best be left with the --

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MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is asking a question which suggests its own answer and is in the form of debate. The hon. Member for Little Bow, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View.

Civil Service Car Allowances

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. minister responsible for personnel, Dr. Hohol. What is the government's policy with regard to employees of the government owning their cars, charging mileage and the government purchasing cars for the use of the civil service in carrying out its function and responsibility?

DR. HOHOL:

Mr. Speaker, I think this falls in the area of the Provincial Treasurer and I would ask him to comment.

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member's question in the first instance was with regard to mileage claims by the civil service. Mr. Speaker, this area is one that I have my department examining at the present time. Generally speaking, there are some positions that receive a flat monthly allowance for car expenses. In other cases the civil servant would use his car and charge the business mileage at a stipulated rate per mile. But I have become aware in my assessment of the situation that perhaps there is a need for review of this policy and I have this underway at the present time. With respect to the provision of cars for civil servants, the general policy in the province is that no cars are provided except for the ministers of the Crown.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Relative to a return that came in last week why has the government then added some 1,111 vehicles to the public service?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is that we found on a more thorough examination -- once we had sufficient time to examine the automobile fleet -- that for several years there had been units that had not been covered. So there was a catch-up of some -- I can't name the exact number -- but some few hundred units that had not previously been covered due to not having been inventoried. These were included in the renewal of the policy in the current year. This was a result of more detailed examination of the automobile fleet.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, as a matter for clarification - the government then has not added any new vehicles?

MR. MINIELY:

No, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has drawn an incorrect conclusion. I said that a portion of -- which in my understanding is that a few hundred vehicles which did exist had not previously been because of the fact they had not been properly inventoried and covered in previous years' automobile fleet insurance. So the 1,100 vehicles which are referred to, include some new units and the balance are the catch-up of units that had always existed but had not been included and had not been covered.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is it now the policy to provide some of the new cars to Deputy Ministers of the government?

MR. MINIELY:

Certainly not, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, does this mean that last year there were several hundred vehicles that had no insurance on them whatsoever?

MR. MINIELY:

Mr. Speaker, it means for several years there had been vehicles which had not been covered by insurance on them. That is correct.

MR. SPEAKER:

Might this be the last supplementary on this topic?

MR. RUSTE:

To the minister. Have there been any changes in the coverage in the policies taken out now?

MR. MINIELY:

Well, if you wanted to give me a time frame I would be able to answer that question. I'm not sure whether you're talking about 1971 or 1972.

MR. SPEAKER:

Possibly the hon. member could put that question on the Order Paper. The hon. Member for Calgary Mountainview followed by the hon. Member for Smoky River.

Legal Manpower

MR. LUDWIG:

A question for the hon. Minister of Advanced Education. I wonder if he could advise the House as to what studies and inquiries he has made to determine that lawyers protect their own interests, and that there are lawyers roaming around the province without employment --

MR. SPEAKER:

Would the hon. member please come directly to the question.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I have finished my question. I wonder if I can rephrase the question since the hon. Minister seems a bit stunned as to what to do.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could the question be restated without its innuendo?

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I am reading from a quotation of the hon. minister's remarks, and if that's innuendo, then perhaps I could -- I will restate the question. Has the minister made any inquiry to determine whether lawyers are protecting their own interests in this province and whether there are unemployed lawyers wandering around the province looking for work?

MR. POSTER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted finally to have the opportunity of getting to my feet. I was afraid I wouldn't have the opportunity to respond to the innuendo from opposite. I think the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, is referring to newspaper reports of some remarks I am apparently reported to have said concerning my former profession while at the University of Calgary speaking with students and faculty.

I don't want to take too long, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps I could put the record straight in this way. I referred, while with the students, to a question of a law school, and to the question that of assessing whether or not another law faculty would be accommodated at any university in this province. One of those considerations was the question of legal manpower and legal manpower requirements.

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One of the considerations in legal manpower requirements, Mr. Speaker, is whether or not there will be the use of, by any profession, para-professional people. So it's one of the many considerations that is necessary. And at Calgary, I think I indicated that the medical profession and the dental profession were already quite highly involved in the matter of para-professionals. In my judgment, in my opinion, the legal profession was not. And in my opinion, it was time that the legal profession gave serious consideration to the matter of para-professionals, law clerks, etc., and since the hon. member opposite who asked the question is also a member of the same profession, I know that he understands what I am talking about.

Because of there being no clear information on the matter of para-professionals and law clerks as a consideration for legal education, I thought it was time that someone had a look at this. I fully intend to ask the benchers of the Law Society if they would assist me in this regard. I have had overtures from a number of quarters, including the university, concerning legal manpower studies; I've read those from Ontario, and I think we should look at this field. I'm delighted if there are members of this House who want to have input into that question, and I would welcome response from the member opposite.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Then the minister is saying that he has not really conducted any inquiry or investigation that led to his remarks in Calgary?

MR. FOSTER:

Mr. Speaker, I did not say that I had not prepared a study or that I had prepared a study. I said that I saw there was a need for this kind of information. The opinions I was expressing in Calgary were opinions, Mr. Speaker, of a practitioner in a four-man law firm who was the office manager of that firm and who, the year before getting into politics, interviewed some 20 students for jobs in law, students from all over western Canada who, in the two or three years before that, had never knocked on the door of a small law firm in the City of Red Deer. I said, as a lawyer, I am a little concerned that there has been no careful analysis of legal manpower requirements in this province. That may be a biased, personal opinion, Mr. Speaker, but it is an opinion which I hold.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Smoky River followed by the hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation.

Grain Quotas

MR. MOORE:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture. In reply to a question last Wednesday I posed, relative to quotas, the hon. minister advised that he had made certain representations to the Canadian Wheat Board relative to extending those quotas. Can you now advise if you have heard anything from the Wheat Board or if, in actual fact, quotas have been extended?

DR. HORNER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can say to the hon. Member for Smoky River and others who have brought this to the attention of the department, that we have now had confirmation from the Canadian Wheat Board that these quotas have been extended until the end of the year.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Sedgewick-Coronation followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Bow.

Agricultural Development Committee

MR. SORENSON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Are the non-farm members on the Agricultural Development Committee strictly non-farmers or just what is meant by this particular committee member?

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DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, they are usually local businessmen and may have some involvement in farming themselves, but primarily not. They are an attempt to get the local business community involved with the agricultural industry in their area and to take advantage of their experience and their knowledge. In addition to that, of course, there is a nominee from the municipality, a nominee from the Farm Credit Corporation, the district agriculturist, and in those areas in which substantial public lands are involved, there is a nominee from my colleague's department of Lands and Forests.

DR. BUCK:

Smile when you say that!

DR. HORNER:

In addition to that, of course, there are two additional farm members. We think these committees will be a great deal of benefit to us in helping rural Alberta.

MR. SORENSON

A supplementary question to the hon. minister. There are 300-plus positions in these committees and to my knowledge there is one lady member. How were you able to manage this?

AN HON. MEMBER:

That wasn't easy!

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, the submissions by the variety of people didn't include that many women. We would have liked to appoint more and we will appoint more. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we've moved ahead very substantially within my department in appointing women to a variety of posts. I might say to the House that we're very pleased with the appointment of a housewife on the marketing council. She has done a tremendous job and has improved the insight of our producers into what they have to produce. We are very pleased with the appointment of Edna Clarke to our policy secretariat in a very senior position in relation to the general policy in agriculture. In addition to that, the appointment of Fran Cullen as head of our consumer affairs division in agriculture has had a substantial impact, not only on the people of Alberta, but on a lot of the business people who are doing business in Alberta in relation to processing agricultural products for the domestic market. We intend to move forward with additional women appointees just as soon as time and the availability come about.

MR. R. SPEAKER:

A supplementary question to the hon. minister. Mr. Minister, before you got involved in the second part of that answer, did you only nominate people who were recommended by local county councils and members of the legislature?

DR. HORNER:

Well, there were a variety of areas where nominations came from, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the county council had their own appointees. They also made nominations in relation to whom they thought might be worthwhile as farmer and business representatives. I asked the district agriculturist in each of the areas to bring forth names. I asked the M.L.A.s to submit names.

DR. BUCK:

All the M.L.A.s?

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DR. HORNER:

I asked the district agriculturalists in each of the areas to bring forth names; I asked the M.L.A.s to submit names; and I asked other interested people or bodies such as Unifarm and the local organizations to submit names. All in all, Mr. Speaker, we had the benefit of a great number of submissions from a great variety of people to try and pick the best.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the government keep a list of these women, and if so, would he table it with telephone numbers?

DR. HORNER:

Mr. Speaker, we're not running a lonely hearts club, if that's what the hon. member is talking about.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Bow, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo.

Elected Representatives on Provincial Payroll

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. To your knowledge now, were any Conservative candidates during the recent federal election campaign on the payroll of the government of Alberta? You previously stated, in part, "Certainly not."

MR. LOUGHEED:

I answered that before; certainly not.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. the Premier. Are you not aware that Mr. Joe Clark of Edson was on the provincial government payroll during the federal election campaign?

MR. LOUGHEED:

No, Mr. Speaker, I was not, and if he was I'll check into it and advise the hon. member.

MR. WILSON:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is it your government's intention to employ Conservative candidates during election campaigns, and will you advise of any other circumstances similar to that of Mr. Clark?

[Interjections]

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

DR. HORNER:

We're not like the Social Creditists who have to hire people to run.

MR. HO LEM:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. the Premier care to table all work done by federal Conservative candidates prior to the October 30th election for the provincial government?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sour grapes.

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MR. SPEAKER:

If the hon. member wishes to have something tabled, perhaps he could put a question or a motion on the Order Paper.

MR. HO LEM:

I will put it another way. Would it not be better for the Premier to voluntarily make a statement --

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the hon. member debating, or is he asking a question?

MR. HO LEM:

Mr. Speaker, I was asking a question.

MR. SPEAKER:

A question that suggests its own answer is in the nature of debate and is clearly ruled out under Citation 171 of Beauchesne. The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo.

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Speaker, with respect to my question, it has already been adequately answered by the hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Stony Plain, followed by the hon. Member for Wainright.

New Year's Eve

MR. PURDY:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Attorney General. Since New Year's Eve falls on a Sunday this year, will the Attorney General allow communities and clubs to start New Year's Eve at an earlier hour than midnight?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, I really don't control the time New Year's Eve starts. We have made some arrangements to facilitate the annual celebration. As to just exactly all of the things we have done, I would like to check that before answering the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wainright, followed by the hon. Member for Macleod.

Lannate Rebate

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Will the government of Alberta be making any rebate on the purchase of lannate, as is being done by the neighbouring province of Saskatchewan? The reported reasons for that are low transportation costs, favourable to Canadian-United States --

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member has already asked his question, without the supplementary information being added.

DR. HORNER:

We have given consideration, Mr. Speaker, but there are substantial differences between the availability of lannate. As a matter of fact, Saskatchewan had promised us some and they used it themselves so we had to send a special plane to Houston for supplies. The cost to the provincial government for lannate transportation and distribution is substantial, well over \$300,000. At the present time no consideration has been given to additional rebates in this area.

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MR. RUSTE:

A supplementary question to the minister. Was there any evidence of any of the supplies of lannate being used this year being ineffective, thereby causing a need for re-spraying?

DR. HORNER:

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think if the hon. member had been awake during the previous week or two, I outlined in some detail some of the failures that were caused in relation to lannate failure. This had to do with the question of climate far more than anything else. In addition to that, we hope to have substantially better input in our extension service in regard to how we can beat the army worms through cultural practices as well as additional chemicals that will be available. Most of the cases that required respraying had to do with the fact that in the first spraying the climatic conditions were such that the lannate didn't do the job.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Macleod followed by the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury.

Gas Rates

MR. BUCKWELL:

This question is to the hon. the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Regarding your policy that Albertans would have preference in serving the oil industry in Alberta, is the Premier aware that reports from northwestern Alberta show B.C. dealers are now providing these services from British Columbia?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member could elaborate a little bit on what he meant by the background of the question?

MR. BUCKWELL:

I understand that the report of the Premier was that gas and oil for rigs and such things have been sold by B.C. dealers in Alberta. Alberta dealers, particularly Esso dealers, are quite concerned about it. B.C. dealers are either underselling or getting the business.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the facts in that particular case but I will check into it and advise the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury followed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

Rocky Mountain Insurance Co.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. the Attorney General, and ask if the government has received any requests from other insurance companies dealing with the possible merger or reinstatement of Rocky Mountain Insurance Company?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, we had some discussions with other insurance companies in the spring. They weren't related to a merger, but there were companies who thought they might be interested in acquiring the business. Nothing came of those discussions and within the past weeks I have heard of a company that might have some interest in acquiring the business.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, have there been any approaches made to the Attorney General by Professional Life regarding taking over some of the responsibilities of Rocky Mountain Life?

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MR. LEITCH:

No, I have had some discussions with representatives of Professional Life, but they were of a very general nature and didn't involve taking over any of the business of Rocky Mountain.

MR. CLARK:

My last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the government still open to proposals that would come from some segments of the insurance industry?

MR. LEITCH:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I believe, in answer to a question earlier in the session about that, I said that we certainly have an open mind on it. We would listen very carefully to any proposal that would assure the existing policyholders good service, and all of the benefits they are entitled to under their contracts with Rocky Mountain. Once those two things were assured, we would then look at the financial implications of any proposal.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Clover Bar followed by the hon. Opposition House Leader.

Hunting Restrictions

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to apologize to you and the House because even dentists have cavities and, man, am I frozen! So I'm not drunk, I'm just frozen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

DR. BUCK:

My question is to the hon. Minister of Lands and Forests. I would like to know if his department is looking, or reviewing, the problems that exist in the areas within, say, 40 miles of Edmonton and Calgary as far as hunting goes with big game rifles. I would like to know, in view of the fact that some of the counties are restricting hunting, if his department is looking at this problem?

DR. WARRACK:

Yes we are, Mr. Speaker. At first I was 'numbed' by the question. We are and have --

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

DR. WARRACK:

We are and have been looking at that very matter, Mr. Speaker. In relation to that we had had some considerable input and discussion in conjunction with the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Council that meets prior to the setting of game regulations each year. As a consequence of those discussions, and also the suggestions from a number of quarters, there have been some additional restrictions put on for high powered rifles on public roads anywhere in Alberta, and this has been a move that was a change from the past and one that has met with very good comment from the public at large and I think has helped a good deal in the safety problem the hon. member is bringing forward and, I think, should be helpful in heading-off the necessity that many of the municipalities and counties have felt, in having to deal with these in more extreme ways.

DR. BUCK:

Supplementary, how much input has there been on this advisory committee from the farmers or from farm groups?

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DR. WARRACK:

Very considerable, Mr. Speaker. The Uniform Organization has representation on this committee, also the Western Stock Growers, and a number of other rural related groups including this year, both tourism and a representative from the Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. Those were two new representations in order to get the broadest possible input on the decisions that we were making with respect to the Game Regulations.

DR. BUCK:

A last supplementary. In the areas, hon. minister, where there has been a restriction from rifles to slugs and bows and arrows, has this helped to solve the problem?

DR. WARRACK:

I have not really had feedback with respect that very specific matter. The Fish and Wildlife Division may have have had, but I really had no basis on which to answer that specific question.

New Year's Eve (cont'd)

MR. SCHMID:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add some information regarding New Year's Eve. The regulations under The Amusements Act were amended by Executive Council some time ago, and I hope and I understand that most of the proprietors of dance halls have been informed that on New Year's Eve dancing is permitted between 9 pm that Sunday and 2 am the following Monday morning.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Opposition House Leader followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

Rapeseed Market

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the hon. Minister of Industry and Commerce has any further information on rapeseed from Peace River.

MR. PEACOCK:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member asked that question in the House last week. We checked into it and the rapeseed from Peace River goes at the Crowsnest Pass rate. The reason for a differential between that and wheat is the handling cost of rapeseed. That might account for some of the discrepancy that has been reported out of Peace River with regard to the price. I might also add, Mr. Speaker, if I am given this latitude, that rapeseed is sold on the free enterprise market; that might account also for a different end-price depending on who might be buying it at the terminal, rather than the wheat board.

MR. TAYLOR:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the handling charges on rapeseed be different this year from last year?

MR. PEACOCK:

Not in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, but I am not sure.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican followed by the hon. Member for Wainwright.

Petroleum Policies

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question today to the hon. Premier regarding a new natural gas policy for Albertans. I was wondering what steps the government is going to take to stop any retaliatory action that may be taken

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against the government. I was thinking in particular of the Ottawa Valley agreement, because the provinces are, as the hon. Premier is aware, concerned, and so is the federal government. I wondered what steps you are going to take by way of public relations to let the rest of Canada know what we have in mind here in Alberta.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, the difficulty with that question is that it contains an assumption I am sure the hon. member doesn't agree with, and that is that there is something basically unfair or unjust about the policy that we presented. All we are asking for is equity for the people of Alberta, and I would not expect it would be retaliatory to mention that.

MR. DIXON:

Supplementary question, a more direct question then. What steps is the government going to take which actually may be taken the other way, so that western oil may be replaced by imported oil if we continue our policy as expressed here last Thursday?

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I think it is quite clear, in a nation having an industrial strategy (hopefully) that would be in the best interests of all of Canada, that it is quite obvious that -- we are in a situation in Canada at the moment such that about 50 per cent of the oil that we consume in Canada is imported, despite the fact that we have the productive capacity. And there is no oil producing nation that is even close in the amount of the oil that is imported. And if we are going to have a nation at all, surely any deterioration in something such as our national oil policy is not something that would be acceptable to citizens of this nation.

MR. DIXON:

One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the hon. Premier is going to get in touch with the Premier of Quebec, because apparently they are starting immediately to look for other sources of natural gas.

MR. LOUGHEED:

Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the report. I think it is fair to say that that was a report commissioned some time ago by the Government of Quebec, that dealt with the question and happened to be tabled relatively concurrently with our gas policies. I am sure they are aware, as certainly the people in Boston, Massachusetts are aware, that the cost of imported liquified natural gas is well over a dollar per thousand cubic feet. I am sure they are also aware of the great expense that is involved in large-scale importation of liquified natural gas.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Wainwright, followed by the hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen.

Highway Signs

MR. RUSTE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Highways and Transport. When will the statement be available, or will it be available for the end of the session, relating to highway signing and your policy? You referred to it a few days ago as being almost ready.

MR. COPITHORNE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. It won't be ready until sometime in the coming session in the spring.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Hanna-Oyen.

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Division of Matrimonial Property

MR. FRENCH:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. Attorney General. In the spring session I inquired about the report from the Institute of Law Research and Reform with respect to the division of matrimonial property following divorce and I am wondering if the report has now been received and, if not, when would you expect to receive it?

MR. LEITCH:

Mr. Speaker, that's an important question and I am glad the hon. member raised it because there have been a number of other people show an interest in it. I have not yet received the report. It is a rather massive study which the institute has undertaken. It covers the whole field of family law and I have not received a date from them as to when they expect the report to be available.

MR. FRENCH:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. Attorney General expect to receive it before the beginning of the next session of the legislature?

MR. LEITCH:

I wouldn't think so, Mr. Speaker. The institute has given an undertaking to forward to us prior to this year end, the report on expropriation and that is also a very difficult topic and will, I'm sure, involve a very lengthy report. I doubt that they are going to be able to make a great deal of headway on the family law study until they have that one out of the way.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Catonio Report

MR. TAYLOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Has the government had time to consider whether or not the Catonio Report is acceptable?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I looked upon the findings of Judge Catonio's report in two classifications; one was a series of recommendations that were primarily administrative, and another series of recommendations had significant budgetary implications. In regard to the ones that were primarily administrative, I have asked the department to make recommendations at once upon which of those could begin to be implemented, and this is in process now. On the other ones we are considering them in conjunction with our preparation of the budget.

MR. TAYLOR:

A supplementary question. Then any increase in foster home rates would not occur until after the next fiscal year?

MR. CRAWFORD:

I think that anticipates something, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the budget, but I could certainly say that we don't expect there would be any increase in this fiscal year.

MR. TAYLOR:

One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. minister looking with favour on the recommendation of taking out insurance to cover the wrongful acts of foster children? This is of great concern to many foster parents.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Yes, that is a matter on which I have not resolved a final position, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury.

MR. CLARK:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Attorney General, and ask him the status of the work done by the Institute of Law Research and Reform in the field of expropriation.

MR. LEITCH:

I thought, Mr. Speaker, I had just answered that. They have told me they will have a report in my hands by the year end.

MR. CLARK:

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In light of the comments made by the minister at last session, that we could expect a review of the expropriation legislation in the province, will you be presenting legislation to the winter session?

MR. LEITCH:

I don't know if one can answer that, Mr. Speaker, without having a look at the report and seeing what's recommended. I rather expect that, even if it came in within the next two or three weeks, it would be impossible to review the report, have the recommendations considered by all those people who should consider it, and get legislation into the House in the spring '73 session.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Calgary Millican.

Hospitals - Undertakers

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development. Is the government going to give instructions to the hospitals in Alberta, so that when they ship bodies out of a hospital they be properly looked after, rather than what happened over the weekend in a hospital in northern Alberta?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, there are several things involved in the matter raised by the hon. member, but the report that appeared over the weekend was not in respect to an incident that occurred over the weekend; it occurred some ten days to two weeks ago in northern Alberta. The explanation given was one that was certainly not satisfactory to me. It indicated that the procedure followed in returning a deceased child to its home for burial was one that -- by the standards of southern Alberta -- was rather informal but rather more common in the north. Even so, the involvement of the Department of Indian Affairs, of course, is a principal matter in that particular case.

Some time ago, when this first came to my attention, about a week or ten days ago, I asked that steps be taken at once to deal with the appropriate officials of the Indian Affairs Department, as well as to indicate to the hospital board in question that we expected if they had troubles obtaining the services of an undertaker, which is part of the problem in remote communities, that at least they store at the hospital a small selection of caskets that could be used for the transportation of bodies. I'm presuming that this course is being followed, and in following it up we will be looking to other hospitals where the previous practices have been followed to see that the changes are also made there.

MR. DIXON:

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Am I correct in assuming, Mr. Minister, that where they are in an Alberta hospital, our act has precedence over the federal Indian Affairs Act?

MR. CRAWFORD:

Well, our act certainly governs our own hospital system, Mr. Speaker, but of course the deceased, in that case, was the responsibility of the Department

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of Indian Affairs, and it was from that point of view that their involvement arose. Also the particular hospital in question was formerly operated by the Department of Indian Affairs and has only recently been taken over by a local board. They are doing their best to improve practices there but haven't been entirely successful.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

Suspended Drivers Lists

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a matter that is certainly of serious concern to the members of this House and to the people of this province. It deals with the question that I put to the hon. Minister of Highways last Thursday concerning the reports of lists of suspended drivers, and I will refer to a question I put to the minister and then follow up with my remarks. I asked:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary, to the hon. minister. What security is taken to ensure that private individuals or companies do not get hold of the suspended drivers list?

Mr. Copithorne:

Mr. Speaker, in this regard I have not seen the news article that the hon. member is referring to, but I have heard about the program that was referred to this morning. As nearly as I can ascertain, the list that he was referring to is at least two and one-half years of age and at this time we have not considered this area as an area that should be explored, but we will certainly do that to be sure that an act of confidentiality is adhered to.

Mr. Speaker, I'm stating that the hon. minister, either from ignorance or for other reasons, had misled the House. I'm satisfied that the list of suspended drivers was that of October 1, 1972 as published October --

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please! The hon. member is purporting to raise, under a point of privilege, his dissatisfaction with an answer given by the hon. minister. This is not the occasion for debating the adequacy or inadequacy of that answer.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on speaking to that ruling, I am trying to indicate that the hon. minister misled the House. I'm not concerned about his answer. I want to show that on two instances in his reply he had, in fact, misled the House, whether deliberately or not. I believe that, Mr. Speaker, does come strictly under a point of privilege. I would like to proceed if I may.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No!

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this matter simply involves a dispute arising between two members as to allegations of fact. Under Beauchesne, Citation 113, that does not fulfill the conditions of parliamentary privilege. I would further suggest, sir, that after you have made a ruling, it is not the propriety of any member of this House to question it but he must put it to a vote whether or not the Speaker's ruling is upheld.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, with due respect to the hon. Government House Leader, I have not stated my facts and therefore it is impossible to make a ruling as to whether I have a case against the hon. minister of misleading the House. I'm trying to do that under a point of privilege.

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MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member, in effect, is disagreeing with the apparent statement of fact by an hon. minister. In the opinion of the Chair, this does not prima facie constitute a point of privilege.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order then. I'm suggesting that the hon. minister misled the House and I'm accusing him of doing it. We should clear this issue, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The matter has been dealt with insofar as the question of privilege is concerned. It may not be debated, nor may it be raised under the guise of a point of order.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table a letter and a news report on this issue.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, there is no provision for the tabling of documents at this time by the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER:

Unless the hon. member is able to point explicitly some authority for tabling the document at this time, I must find that it is not open to be tabled.

MR. LUDWIG:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the government's sensitivity about this, I'll seek other means of getting this published.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order please! The rulings of the Chair are not subject to the hon. member's subsequent comments.

GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Second Reading)

Bill No. 126, The Election Statutes Amendment Act, 1972

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Public Works, second reading of Bill No. 126, The Election Statutes Amendment Act. The purpose of this bill is to transfer to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly the election proceeding and administration duties which presently reside with the Clerk of the Executive Council. Under the five bills which are in Bill No. 126, the government believes that matters pertaining to the administration and conduct of elections, be they general elections, by-elections, or liquor plebiscites, should be dealt with by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, as that person is responsible to the assembly, rather than by the Clerk of the Executive Council, as that person is responsible to the government cabinet.

[The Deputy Speaker in the Chair.]

I don't believe any further discussion is necessary on this, Mr. Speaker. The five acts which are involved are listed in paragraphs one to five of the bill. I would be happy to answer any questions that come up during second reading debate.

[The motion was carried, and Bill No. 126 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 125, The Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Foundation Act

MR. CRAWFORD:

Mr. Speaker, this bill, as well, is one which I think I can present to the House with very few remarks. It is a short bill, and the objects of it are ones which I'm sure will commend themselves to all hon. members.

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The area of alcoholism and drug abuse is, of course, one of the most difficult that governments have to deal with, and one of the most difficult that the private sector in its efforts to make some contribution to that area has to deal with, too. We have remarked in this assembly before about the numerous and regrettable problems that alcoholism and drug abuse bring to so many people -- both those who suffer directly and those who suffer indirectly.

I think it is also true in regard to so many areas that in order to have a complete approach to any subject matter, programming and policies are all very well, of course, and it is our hope to be as useful in bringing those forward and carrying them out as possible. But the area of research and education is an area of its own which is necessary in order to round out a complete approach on behalf of the government and others interested in a problem like this. The bill proposed will establish a foundation whose primary objectives will be research and education. It will be governed by a group of trustees, several of whom will be nominated by areas of the private sector involved in education and research in alcoholism and drug abuse, including the universities. It will fund itself by approaches to potential contributors, and by the establishment of a foundation from which the proceeds can be used for the establishment of university chairs and further efforts in regard to both research and education. So, Mr. Speaker, I do commend this bill to all hon. members. I look upon it as a very useful thrust in this area, and would now like to move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Advanced Education, that Bill No. 125 be read a second time.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make one or two comments in connection with second reading of Bill No. 125. In the first place, I'm wondering if the hon. minister would deal with the name chosen when he is closing the debate. It is the Alberta Foundation for University Research and Education in Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. There is a minority of university people on the foundation. The University of Lethbridge is not mentioned. I think it is high time that our universities, with their very knowledgeable people, should be getting into research of some of the items that bother the every-day people of our country.

Drug and alcohol abuse has been with us for a long time, including the abuse of cigarettes and the abuse of liquor. Many people look upon the abuse of drugs as a different item, but actually it is in the same category. I'm glad the hon. minister has used the word "abuse" there; it's not the use, it's the abuse. I think that indicates the very excellent attitude I am glad to see the foundation accepting, that the abuse of the best thing in the world can be very, very bad. We can abuse drinking milk to the extent that that becomes abuse rather than use, so other things can be abused too.

I don't see anything in the act that tries to interfere with the choice or the right of people to decide whether they use or whether they don't use drugs and alcohol, and that is in keeping with our Bill of Rights, I suppose, and with our general attitude in this country. The abuse, however, I think does come into a different category whenever a drug is abused, because then it adversely affects other people, sometimes a loved one, sometimes complete strangers, sometimes a community at large. It is high time, I think, that universities did get into the research of things like this that are of concern to the rank and file of the people.

I'm glad to see this foundation coming into being. I would hope there would be many contributions, particularly from those who make profit through the sale of alcohol and drugs. Too long some have been making a great amount of profit through having the right to sell alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs. Of course, some of it is done illegally. But those who are making the money, or to put it colloquially 'making the hay', should be putting some money into correcting some of the damage done to human lives through the use of drugs and alcohol. Whether or not the contributions will come from those sources remains to be seen, but I would think there should be no hesitation in asking those who are 'making the hay' out of this type of thing to make vast contributions towards correcting -- insofar as it is humanly possible -- the damage done to human lives through the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs.

The other item that I would like to mention briefly -- that I would hope the hon. minister would cover -- is the responsibility of the foundation whose members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. I would take it that the Foundation would be responsible to the cabinet of the province, but I would like to be definitely sure on that particular point.

The last item I would like to mention in connection with this bill is the fact that there should be very close liaison between the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission and the Foundation. Otherwise it may well be that research and

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planning and expenditures of money will be duplicated without accomplishing very much. By making sure that research is carefully planned and divided between the bodies, and even having in mind it might be done by groups outside the province, I think we can make progress in the reduction of the use of alcohol and drugs and consequently the elimination of the potential danger of every user becoming an abuser.

DR. PAPROSKI:

The introduction of this particular Act, The Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Foundation Act, and the establishment of the Alberta Foundation for University Research and Education on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, I think is both gratifying and very timely and I think all the members here would recognize very quickly that it is very, very important.

I consider it personally gratifying because I have, as the hon. minister knows, submitted a report on a number of occasions supporting this direction based on the support of various leaders in the community for such a foundation and, hopefully, for the establishment of a seat or a unit or a section at the University of Alberta to study this area.

When we turn to this problem it is evident quite quickly, and I am sure that the hon. members realize it, how immense and urgent in fact it is, not only in Alberta, but across Canada. For example, just to refresh some of the memories of the hon. members here (maybe they know it, maybe they don't) there are some 30,000 alcoholics in Alberta. Now 30,000 alcoholics by themselves may not seem very much. To me, it is enormous. The members in the families they represent equate this to approximately to 100,000 to 150,000 people. Now, when you add the other aspects of addiction to other drugs and chemicals, it is just out of proportion. It is unbelievable. The amount of human suffering and the economic cost caused as a result of alcohol and drug abuse is just unbelievable. In alcohol alone it is estimated that in Alberta the loss in business and industry, loss of wages through absenteeism and so forth, runs in the area of \$2 to \$3 million a year.

In other words, the size of the problem is so great that, if in fact it were a communicable disease, (in this country as it is) there are some 300,000 alcoholics and it would be considered a national emergency. And yet, quantitatively and qualitatively in this particular area of alcoholism and drug abuse, both the private agencies and the government agencies have failed to resolve the immense problem.

And, Mr. Speaker, if I may, I will just quote two or three statistical items I think would be of interest to solidify and focus on this particular problem. It has been stated (and I believe this) that, 30 to 40 per cent of all delinquent youths come from homes where there is parental excessive drinking and alcoholism. Approximately 50 per cent of all police arrests, courts and institutional costs are alcoholic-related offences. I will skip a few of them. Over 60 per cent of the physicians refused to treat alcoholic problems, and as high as 90 per cent of the general hospitals and clinics in this province and across Canada, will not and do not accept these patients at all. Fifty per cent of the first admissions to mental hospitals suffer from alcoholism, and 37 per cent of all suicides are subjects of chronic alcoholism.

When it comes down to impaired driving, and I think the members will realize how important this is, both Canadian and United States studies confirm that alcohol is involved in 50 per cent of all fatal motor vehicle accidents. We hear lots about Viet Nam and so forth, that in fact, the deaths caused as a result of this particular item alone, total more than all the murders and all the deaths of Viet Nam thus far. It is unreal. Yet what have we done for alcoholism and drug addiction? Yes, we have had the Le Dain Commission which is a national report and is doing nothing. We have had various reports, commissions and so forth, yet this doesn't get down to the crux of the problem.

Therefore, this act, by establishing at least a university seat and the foundation to do research and study, will hopefully concern itself with the major item of overuse and misuse of alcohol, and other related chemicals and items which are addictive. It will provide leadership, I hope, at the university level, and a focal point, and very importantly, will provide education at the undergraduate and post-graduate level (as well as research) so it will increase the stature of knowing something about alcohol and it will not be something that we should hide behind or not deal with directly.

Now this particular act deals with a very important item, and I think we all can see that, but as quickly as I say that, I don't think this is enough and we all realize that too I think the problem as has been described by statistics,

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(and there are many others that I can quote, but I will not because of time) is obvious, and it is important that we deal with this problem directly at the community level and not waffle around with reports, or for that matter just merely with research although both are very, very important. I suggest to the hon. members and to the hon. minister that he, of course, consider -- hopefully he is doing so -- that a definite program be set up to help these people who are alcoholics and addicts, And that the program be not in one little centre in, say the City of Edmonton serving some half million people, but on a province-wide basis.

When I say this program should be set up quickly, I qualify this remark by saying, ladies and gentlemen, the entrance into this type of a program has to be both voluntary and involuntary. Now as you remember, when The Mental Health Act came up for third reading I was very concerned about the involuntary ability of entering a patient into a program for therapy. Well, certainly it has been shown, in the area of alcoholism, that enforced treatment is as effective as that which is voluntary. Of course it would be much better to have a voluntary patient, but with these people -- the chronic alcoholics and addicts -- they know not what they are doing and there must be an involuntary measure probably brought into law.

So the program I am suggesting here for consideration, in addition to what is now being done -- which is an important step -- is to have this program so that every alcoholic and drug addict is pre-assessed by some pre-established criteria to establish that he is or is not an alcoholic or an addict. One it is established that he is this, then he should enter into a program or system for care -- which I will describe very briefly in a moment -- either on a voluntary basis or an involuntary basis -- by law. And he will stay in that system of care until he is discharged, until he has reached the arrested stage or he feels he is in control, and the therapist feels that is controlled. But if reverts back to alcoholism or addiction, he enters back into the system.

Now the basic program, as I see it, is quite simplistic when you dialogue it. Of course, there are a lot of problems related to it, but I see no reason, economically or otherwise, that we should not handle this because the problem -- as I stated before -- is second only as a public health problem to mental health and heart disease.

What we should have in every active general hospital are wards, units, or so called, detoxification centres, if you wish, (I prefer the word wards or units) and in every hospital an adequate number of beds assigned to deal with alcoholics and drug addicts. Of course these beds could be used for other problems if the volume is not there. I suspect it will be there. It has been estimated that in each active hospital in this province in the major urban cities we need approximately 40 to 60 beds. Now this is one point of entry for these alcoholics and drug addicts.

Secondly, out of the hospital care, we need special care homes or facilities, and I am sure the minister may be thinking about that. We need the hostels -- Henwood and Belmont are examples -- where some excellent care can be provided. However, I would certainly question and query very severely why reports are coming out that Henwood and Belmont are being used at one-half capacity or one-third capacity when there are so many alcoholics roaming the streets and causing so many problems.

Now the third part -- the general hospital is one, for the total assessment by a team of professionals; of course you have to assess the physical problems associated with alcoholism and drug addiction and the mental problem and the social necessities; then out into the community into some facility, whether it be Belmont or Henwood; and then you have work camps the third part. The work camps are designed specifically for training, retraining, rehabilitation, and what have you. So this is the three-pronged attack on this type of a problem. These people would appreciate work camps, getting out in the fresh air and having good food and so forth and at the same time doing something productive.

So I offer this to the minister for consideration. I think it is high time we did this. I think we should utilize the existing facilities that we in fact do have in our communities to the fullest extent before we build any other new special centers. The special centres unfortunately will have to have doctors and professionals there to examine these patients, so let's use the units in the active hospitals, expand them if necessary, and have special care facilities and work camps. I think the involuntary nature is a very important item. I challenge any member here just to inquire, with respect to relatives who have alcoholics in their homes, to see the problem as it arises -- they can't do anything about it, they know they're an alcoholic, they know they're driving a

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car, they know they have their driver's licence, they kill somebody and then somebody does something about it.

Now with respect to the comments that were made about taxation and the increased cost of this, I have no hesitation as the Member for Edmonton Kingsway in saying that there should be a special tax levied on those who are producing alcohol and that this tax should not be projected down to the citizens. It should be at a certain level, a special tax, to deal with the problem of alcoholism and other addictions.

Ladies and gentlemen, I conclude my remarks by saying, this is a problem, we know it, it has existed for many many years. The statistics and the work has been done in this area by many members of our community such as George Strachan -- I'm sure you've all heard of him, he's nationally renowned, he's written books on it; Dr. J.A.L. Gilbert who's doing a lot of work at the University Hospital; the support from the Dean of Medicine, Dr. Walter C. MacKenzie, and so forth. I could read off thirty or forty immediately but I will not.

The community is concerned about it, the Minister is obviously acting in the direction the community desires with respect to this act and I commend him on that, but I think we have to step further and provide a total program. I think it's high time we stopped acting like ostriches, putting our heads in the sand and saying, "Well, I see no evil, I hear no evil, and we don't have to do anything about it." This includes the medical profession. We move very rapidly on a number of areas of people concern, in mental health, handicapped children, and we're moving further; this is truly a people concern problem and I suggest and hope that we move in this area with utmost dispatch. Thank you.

MR. GHITTER:

Mr. Chairman, if I may just enter the debate briefly, because I think any time a bill is presented to this House which deals with a very difficult, and certainly not a contemporary problem but one that is seemingly growing by leaps and bounds in this province and elsewhere in Canada. It's always welcome to see legislation which is going to deal in some sense with the problems of research with respect to beverage alcohol. However, I must say I am always somewhat skeptical over the proliferation of foundations and abuse commissions and things of this nature which I feel are not really dealing with the problem in a manner in which it would receive the best attention and the best use of our dollar. The purpose of my rising at this time is to encourage upon the hon. Minister the fact that the only way you'll get good value for the dollar that is going into drug and alcohol abuse is by a co-ordinated effort, not just on the basis of this province, but right across this land. The only time something meaningful will ever come from drug and alcohol abuse commissions and from foundations of this nature is when the federal government and all of the provinces of Canada get together and decide they are going to tackle this problem on a proper research basis, so that we do not have the proliferation of drug and alcohol abuse commissions all doing the same thing and all doing similar research. And until the day comes when matters of this nature are done on a co-ordinated basis right across this land, so that the money can go into one source for one job which we all totally agree with, then and only then will we be getting value for our dollar, and will we get proper and integrated and depth approaches to alcohol research. I would hope that the hon. Minister would keep these few remarks in mind, so that at a later date we can possibly more energetically pursue the situation.

May I also say that the industry that has been criticized on a few occasions for not contributing funds to this area would be most welcome to participate in a financial way of assisting the plan of the hon. Member for Drumheller, that the people that make it should pay. I think you would find that if this were done on a Canada wide basis, that they would be very willing to co-operate by actually paying hard dollars into recognizing this problem. I don't think that the industries would say that they are responsible for the abuse, because it is a very small percentage of the drinking population that abuses beverage alcohol, but certainly they recognize that it's their product that is being abused. I suggest that they should be willing to enter, in a fairly meaningful way, into a dialogue that would involve this approach. So I would only hope that in the long run -- and I hope the not too long run -- this will result in a Canada-wide alcoholic research rehabilitation approach to the problems of research so that we can get the maximum advantage out of worthwhile pieces of legislation of this nature.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

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HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the three hon. members who have spoken for the contributions they have made to the thinking of all of us on this subject. I think it is important to say, in respect to matters that are dealt with outside of the areas of research and education, that they only touch upon what is being proposed in this bill and do not directly relate to it. We would be spending a much longer time searching our souls, our programs, and our policies here today if what was under discussion was the actual programming of the work in regard to alcoholism, addiction, and drug abuse that is being carried on in the province at the present time and will have to be carried on in the future.

I do want to say that I think that where the subject matter of treatment and programs does touch upon what we're doing here is in the area of liaison that was mentioned by the hon. members. I could say to the hon. Member for Drumheller that I think a liaison function can succeed in assuring that what is done by this foundation is that it fills a gap which isn't being filled now, rather than duplicating anything that is being done by the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission. Indeed, the proposal in the bill is that the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission can assure its close liaison by having one of the positions of trustee filled at the nomination of the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission.

The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo made reference to the need for these things to be looked at on a national level. I fully accept the validity of what he said in respect to that. I would just mention that I think there are other areas where our prime concern is research and education, and where there is organization on a provincial basis in relation to national problems. Benefits can be had by co-ordination and by working together in that area and treating it as a national issue, if that is what it is. Take, for example, cancer research, where Alberta is one of the leaders in Canada in an area, which we all agree is a national concern. I think that what we want to be sure of, as the foundation sets about to do its work, by close contact with other groups in the country, we can assure that we have a particular area that we can develop and that will be of use, no doubt, to the whole country. Others will do the same and we'll hope that we won't be spending the same dollar or both doing the same thing over and over again in regard to research. I think we can succeed in that.

The hon. Member for Drumheller raised two other things. I think the brief comment I want to make on the fact that it is proposed in the bill that two of the universities have nominees but the University of Lethbridge isn't referred to, is that this bill -- and I want to give full credit to the group of gentlemen who came forward with the idea; wasn't, in the first instance, conceived as an item of government policy -- it was something that the government was approached on by an ad hoc committee of interested citizens made up from the groups referred to in section five. The Alberta Medical Association was the group that was primarily concerned in approaching my office about it, and by way of their presentation, acquainted me with the fact that these other groups were ready and willing to go ahead with them. I know they also made representations to my colleague, the hon. Minister of Advanced Education, because of the fact that what was proposed, of course, related to a large extent to the establishment of research facilities associated with the universities. So I think that what I could say about that is that the proposal was brought in, on the basis that the University of Lethbridge hadn't been part of the group that had originally got together. I must admit that if that is an oversight, and it may well be, the significance of it didn't catch me right away. All I can say is that I think some thought should be given to that. Without proposing that an amendment take place, we'll certainly do that, because what we are trying to do is reflect the desires of the group of interested citizens who approached us; we can certainly look at it under part G of Section 5, which provides the opportunity to appoint up to five other persons.

As for the other point raised by the hon. Member for Drumheller, whether or not the trustees are responsible primarily to cabinet, I think this is the time to observe that the funds it is proposed this foundation utilize will be raised from the private sector. So primarily, they are responsible you might say, on an annual basis, to the legislature -- although not formally to the legislature in the sense of formal reporting, perhaps; if their role isn't being adequately fulfilled, the government may recommend, indeed any hon. member may recommend, some further close control or close examination of the activities of the foundation be undertaken at that time. At this time, I thought it was very

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useful, considering the initiative that had come from the private sector, and considering the feeling we on this side have (and I know that most hon. gentlemen opposite also have) that there is a role to be played by the private sector, to allow the trustees to set themselves up, in a sense, as a corporation under a provincial act. It is true they could have incorporated under The Societies Act; this is another way that the same purpose could be achieved -- perhaps a little bit better; it will certainly give potential contributors, for example, more confidence in what is proposed. Therefore, rather than the correct interpretation, I think, of being directly responsible to cabinet, they are really responsible to the people of Alberta, because they are being incorporated under a public act. The people that have to watch that and be satisfied with it will be certainly the members of the government, including all hon. members.

[The motion was carried, and Bill No. 125 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 122, The Health Insurance Statutes Amendment Act, 1972

MISS HUNLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Health and Social Development, that Bill No. 122, The Health Insurance Statutes Amendment Act, 1972, be read a second time.

In speaking to the principle of the bill, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much to add to what I said originally when I tabled it. I do have this to say, that having been tabled in the House, the Alberta Medical Association reviewed the bill and found that some of the mechanisms which we had established in the bill were quite cumbersome and unwieldy. They felt it would be quite difficult for them to do their work as we have co-operatively planned. With this in mind, I will be bringing forth some amendments which will simplify the bill, and also will shorten it considerably. The principle is unaltered.

In principle, this bill will write into legislation the work of the professional review committees of the various professions which are paid benefits out of the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission. This bill is indicative of the co-operation which the government, the Health Commission, and the various professions are working towards in order to deliver a more effective health package in a more efficient manner and in a more economical manner. We feel sure that by working together we can help control costs.

Also in the bill are some clauses which will tighten-up some of the operation of the commission and make it a little more effective. There is an opportunity in this bill to amend the act whereby we may not pay claims for people who are residing out of the province if their premium is in arrears. It is a permissive word; we are using 'may', but it would give us an opportunity to take a close look at some of the things that are happening when premiums are not being paid and the people are getting the benefit of the service while living somewhere else.

In Part 2 of the bill, of course, we deal with The Premiums Act and the main part of that deals with the opportunity provided in the amendment for a dependent to remove himself from the opting-out provisions of the act. It is reasonably simple and straightforward and I commend it to you.

MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make one short comment on the bill. I think the rest can wait until committee. I would like the hon. minister to think about a case where a young man is earning the minimum wage only, and even then working only spasmodically, consequently, he is not paying his premium to the Alberta Health Care from the beginning of the plan. He then gets a job and is told that the entire amount of arrears must be paid. He finds this pretty overwhelming because it amounts to quite a bit of money after this period of time. He decides that it is not in his interest to take the job if he is going to have to have this deduction taken off.

I realize there is a responsibility for him to pay his premium. But I am wondering if some arrangement could be made, that when a person in that category -- who hasn't refused to pay because he had the money, but didn't pay because he didn't have the money -- might be put in a category where he can start paying the current account to begin with and gradually go back and pick up the arrears, rather than having the whole bill shoved down him at once, which is pretty discouraging and sometimes enough to drive the man from the job and nothing goes to the Alberta Health Care Plan and he, as well, draws public welfare from one of the cities.

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I think it is worth looking into, if some provision could be made in cases like this where only the current amount is charged until he has at least got on his feet and then progressively pay the arrears.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I must confess that I am a little worried about the section dealing with out-of-province benefits and the possibility that payment may be cut off. I realize that the minister, in introducing Bill No. 122, makes it quite clear that it is a case of 'may' be, not a definite commitment. It still troubles me somewhat because I have in my constituency quite a number of people who are in arrears, not because they are unwilling to pay, but simply because they are in the category of the working poor. They are just above the category where they can get a subsidy and that extra amount of money that they have to put out for the premium is -- at least in several cases that they have come to my attention -- just a little bit more than the family can meet. Consequently, they are in arrears.

Now under this change, as I understand it -- perhaps the minister can clarify it -- if by chance they are out of the province and one of the members of the family gets sick, then the government may or may not accept their medical bills. That concerns me because I really believe that the people who are deliberately cheating on Medicare, Mr. Speaker, are so relatively small that what we are doing here is perhaps going after a very tiny minority, but in the process we may be injuring the position of the working poor, people who just have so little discretionary income at the end of each month that that premium is just the straw that breaks the camel's back. I have always believed that we should have premium-free Medicare, I won't go into that, that is hardly the issue at hand today, but it seems to me, that we should be very careful before moving in such a way that we could jeopardize the benefit for low-income Albertans out of the province, simply because they may not have been able to keep their Medicare premiums up to date.

I would also like to just add on to the point that the hon. Member for Drumheller raised I also know of people who, over the past number of years, have accumulated quite a debt to the commission. It seems to me that if there were some way of starting afresh we might be able to solve their problem, at least in the short run. By and large I agree with the general principles enunciated in Bill No. 122, but I am little concerned about the impact that this will have on those low-income families.

I realize in closing, that it is not a definite statement but it is still a matter of discretion on the part of the commission, but nevertheless, that troubles me because one of the points that I think is most basic to a function in a modern health systems, Mr. Speaker, is that the benefits of modern medicine should be available to every Albertan regardless of their ability to pay. In an effort to try to deal with arrears in payment of premium, if we are cutting back on the benefits to low income people, I submit that we really are doing an injustice to the families of these people and perhaps cutting away one of the foundations in principle of a modern, comprehensive, publicly-administered Medicare health scheme.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

May the hon. minister close the debate?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MISS HUNLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to comment on the payment of arrears as raised by the hon. Opposition House Leader. It is possible to pay arrears. We accept it at the Health Commission, almost any amount payable on arrears. For those who get a job and go into a group plan -- even when the new system of computer selection takes place -- it still will not call for the total payment, it will call for not more than twice the monthly deduction. We make almost any kind of arrangement that people wish to make in order to capture the arrears, so it is not our intention to persecute and unnecessarily make this another millstone around the necks of those who are having difficulty paying.

So perhaps now I could talk about the concerns of the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. When I say that we may withhold payment, the people who are causing us concern are not the working poor, necessarily. But you are able to leave Alberta and go to other countries and remain as a student up until age

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25, establish your home there, marry and raise a family, and still remain as a dependent, or remain as being insured by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Commission. These are times when we think we should take a look and find what the situation actually is and we wish to have in the act authorization that we may withhold payment. It's permissive, and I think there are times when it would be quite justified to say the premium is not paid, I think you should pay us the premium. There are many instances where they are taking advantage of the people of Alberta and I defend this concept. I don't think it would be used at any time even to create a burden for those who are genuine students who are struggling to get themselves an education if it happens to be out of the province. But there are some abuses and I think it is beholden on the commission to take care of the public monies and I am in favour of this clause and I think you would not find it abused, but that it would be very useful.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

It has been moved by the hon. Miss Hunley, seconded by the hon. minister, Mr. Crawford, that Bill No. 122, The Health Insurance Statutes Amendment Act, 1972 be read a second time. Is it agreed?

[The motion was carried, and Bill No. 122 was read a second time.]

Bill No. 124: The Mineral Taxation Amendment Act, 1972

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. Minister of Education that Bill No. 124, The Mineral Taxation Amendment Act, 1972 be now read a second time.

Essentially the bill covers amendments to The Mineral Taxation Act dealing with the assessment and taxation of crude oil. Hon. members will recall the excellent public hearing that we had on the floor of this legislature in June dealing with the government's Tentative Natural Resource Revenue Plan relating to crude oil. Following those public hearings, we assessed and evaluated the various ideas and opinions that were put forth by hon. members on both sides of the House, by representations that were made at that public hearing. As a result of those assessments and evaluations the government announced on July 29th some of its natural resource revenue plan relating to crude oil.

During the course of the discussions and assessment of the various ideas that were put forth, one of the considerations was the question of who would actually do the assessment. Industry had requested that the Energy Resources Conservation Board actually carry out the assessment. That was an assessment to determine what is the fair, actual value -- and those are the words used in the act -- of the crude oil. Their submission was that the Energy Resources Conservation Board have the highly-trained, technical people who could deal with the evaluation of reserves. That submission, Mr. Speaker, was a submission worthy of consideration, as I think it is fair to say that in the Department of Mines and Minerals itself there are not the people who are trained in those skills. The question of having the Energy Resources Conservation Board do the assessment was, I would say, unanimous by representatives of the petroleum industry.

I think we considered some of the concerns that might be expressed by an adverse reaction to that. However, I think when one realizes that the assessment carried out would then be determined and thereafter a mill rate struck by the government would prevent any question of arriving at the actual figure of \$70 million that was set out in the policy statement of July 29th. In view of that, it then felt that it would be fair for the Energy Conservation Board to work the assessment out in a fair and equitable way to all representatives of the petroleum industry.

Primarily the amendment cover the assessment being done in that way. The procedure actually is that the assessor of the Energy Resources Conservation Board will make the assessment; he will have the right to appeal to the Energy Resources Conservation Board and from the Energy Resources Conservation Board there will be an appeal to a committee of the Executive Council.

MR. STROM:

There are just a couple of points that I would like to raise in dealing with the matter of second reading. I certainly can go along with the point that the hon. Minister made in regard to the assesement being done by the Energy Resources Board and the acceptance the industry of this assesement. I think this is indicative of the high regard in which the members of the Energy Resources Board are held, and I'm certainly sure that what he says is true in

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that regard. So I don't think that there will be too much dispute with it but I am a little concerned with the principle of the appeal.

It seems to me that there is a bit of sensitivity in the manner in which the appeal would be made. The minister has just suggested that the appeal would be made to a committee of the Executive Council and here again, I wouldn't debate the procedures too much, Mr. Speaker, except that I note that the decision of this committee would be final and binding. And I'm suggesting that the government might be well advised to take a second look as to whether or not they would want to make it final and binding. There may be even some merit in giving consideration to some other avenue in which the appeal might be made, and I suggest that I would be interested in hearing the hon. minister's remarks as to whether or not they would be interested in giving further consideration to a possibility of striking it out as far as final appeal is concerned.

Then also, I would like to request if the government would consider giving us the regulations as soon as possible, because I suggest that there is an area of vagueness as to what the final procedure will be, as far as making the assessment is concerned. I appreciate that we have said who they are, and I accept that they are a responsibility but there is still some detail left and I would be interested in knowing whether or not any consideration has been given to issuing the regulations at a very early date.

MR. DIXON:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on the principle of this bill. The principle of this bill, of course, is to set up the mechanics for the new oil reserve tax. This bill in my mind is the most important bill to come before this House, except maybe The Bill of Rights. The reason I say that is this is the largest tax increase ever to be placed on Albertans at one time. This increase alone represents the largest single tax increase in our history. It is equal approximately to one-third of the amount of taxes collected on all the property in Alberta. That's how important this bill is, Mr. Speaker.

There are two principles that I'd like to outline to the hon. minister, and when he's ending the debate, I will be pleased to hear from him. One of the principles that I'd like the hon. minister to consider is that when the freehold owners of mineral rights run into financial difficulties and their rights are forfeited or cancelled by the Crown, maybe they should be allowed to pick those rights up again after they have been cancelled, say, in a six month or a year period, provided they pay interest on what they owe, plus the taxes that were in arrears.

The government should consider this time limit because the owners of freehold land cannot pass on increases such as the government itself could do. So that is one of the reasons. Where the freehold landowner isn't in a position to apply the same pressure as the government, then I think there should be some consideration to being a little more lenient when it comes to the principle of forfeiting these mineral rights because of non-payment of taxes.

The other principle of the bill I'm concerned about is the final appeal which is before the Cabinet committee, that goes from the Energy Resources Board to the Cabinet. I question the principle of this appeal for this reason, because the people who will be hearing the appeal will be the same people who are spending the taxes. In other words, you are appealing to people who, with hungry hands, will be waiting to spend the money. The bill, if you really stop to analyze it, is something like William the Conqueror's bill -- William the Conqueror and the Doomsday Tax -- because he put the tax on and said, "You can appeal to me." But he had already spent the money so you knew the type of appeal would be very short and very swift. There wouldn't be any real appeal. So I wonder if the government would give consideration to having the appeal -- as the hon. Leader of the Opposition pointed out a moment ago -- go to another body beyond the cabinet that would be impartial. I believe that where you are the people who are going to be spending the money that you're collecting, we use the principle, even in property tax, and you appeal to a separate board other than the elected officials. And so I think we should use the same principle when it comes to The Mineral Taxation Act.

I have other things to say, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to leave it to a clause-by-clause study. Those two principles were the ones that I was most concerned about. I can't emphasize enough that this is the largest tax increase in the history of this province ever to be implemented at one time. And in particular, when it comes to an appeal, it is very, very important that those people who are affected by this tax be given a right to be heard before an impartial board in the final analysis of the appeal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. TAYLOR:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a word or two. I think there is always a danger, if we mix the legislative up with the administrative. While the Conservation Board is separate in a way, nevertheless it is the child of the provincial government. It works very closely with the hon. minister and the hon. Premier. Consequently, an appeal to the cabinet, I think, is bad in the sense that those who are having something to do with the administration are then hearing an appeal. What I am saying is simply emphasizing what the hon. Leader of the Opposition said and the hon. Member for Calgary Millican said.

I would much rather think that the appeal should go to a court which was going to be knowledgeable in the methods of the assessment, or perhaps better still, to a court of assessment of men who would make it their business to become very familiar with all of the details of this type of an assessment. I think it would be much more palatable and be within the realm of the guidelines that have come down to us through the ages of parliamentary government.

MR. NOTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, unlike the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, I can't rise in my place and say that I consider this tax increase a matter of too great import, but I do agree with the point he made that the cabinet committee as the court of final appeal is, at least at surface glance, not a very sound move. Again, for most of the reasons that have already been cited by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, and just recently by the hon. Member for Drumheller, it would be interesting to know which members of the cabinet will constitute this committee, and I would be a little concerned that we would have some political decisions made respecting the appeal, rather than decisions made on cold hard facts. So I really doubt whether such a move is a wise one, and perhaps the government might reconsider this particular aspect of the bill.

The other point in listening to the minister -- I wasn't quite certain of his position, and perhaps he could comment on it in his closing address -- I understand that the \$70 million figure is a set figure. But it would seem to me that in order to make sure that this money is \$70 million or more as the years go by, we're going to have to have a flexible mill rate. That is that as the reserves go down, the mill rate will have to go up, or the final take that we collect will begin to slip. It seems to me that as I looked through the bill -- and perhaps I may have missed it -- but I didn't notice any clause which really contained what I would judge to be a pretty basic point.

I would remind the minister that one of the submissions made during the hearings last spring, that I think impressed members on both sides of the House, was a submission made by a group of economists at the University of Alberta who constituted an Energy Resources Committee from the Department of Economics; and one of their observations was just this very point, that unless the mill rate went up as the reserves began to drop, the amount of money that we collect would wither away. I gather this is not the intention of the government, but I'd be interested in hearing from the minister just how the government plans to deal specifically with this question, whether or not the mill rate will rise as the reserves decline so that the total amount remains at least at the stagnant level, or even possibly a growing level.

In general then, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to get into the debate that we had last spring; the government has made its decision and will have to live with that decision. I don't believe that we are going for enough, but in terms of the principle in this bill, I really do question whether or not a cabinet committee as the final appeal procedure is a wise one, and one which the government itself will be happy with over the long haul. It would seem to me that it's the kind of legislation that may put this cabinet committee into continuous hot water. I really question whether it's a prudent step at this time.

MR. BUCKWELL:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the minister a few questions on this bill. I understood from our hearings last year, basically the government's paper -- I may be putting this rather bluntly -- you gave the oil companies a choice either voluntarily to break their own agreements with regard to the royalty in oil, or else go for a mineral taxation scheme such as we have before us now. I'm just wondering, have the oil companies indicated -- if, for example a major oil company said, "yes, we would sooner pay by an increasing royalty," -- would they come under this act, or will this act also be in effect?

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Have the oil companies given you any indication -- are they outwaiting the government or hoping the government will change its mind, or have the oil companies indicated as to any choice that they would be willing to change the royalty scheme?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Does the minister have permission to close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. DICKIE:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. members of the opposition have raised some interesting points. Certainly four of them discussed this question of the principle of appeal. I think that was led by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, and it's fair to say that it is a good point. We considered the arguments they had advanced, and I think, too, it is something that we have to consider and take a look at. I would like to suggest that between now and the clause-by-clause study they give further consideration to some of the facts that I will express and some of the considerations we looked at before that decision was made on the question of appeal.

First, I would like to say, I think all hon. members recognize the unique position of the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Part of it is financed by the government and part by industry. I think I would also like to say, too, on this question of appeal, that it is in a little different position than normally, because the assessment itself will be dealing between the equities with the oil companies themselves as to their respective interests that they may hold. As I mentioned in our position paper, we did set the \$70 million, and I might mention for the hon. Member for Spirit River, that that was set at \$70 million exclusive of price increases or production increases. In other words, if there are price increases or production increases, that amount would vary and it is for that reason, of course, that we will not be able to set the mill rate and as the hon. members will recall in the policy statement, it was quite clear that there was no commitment to set a fixed mill rate for five years, although the new royalty schedule was fixed for five years. So I think that is an important point one must keep in mind when you are considering the question of the actual assessment in the appeal provisions.

The hon. members will also recall that under The Mineral Taxation Act that was passed at the spring session, a Mineral Assessment Appeal Board was set up which would be a separate board and that appeal would go under the provisions of the separate appeal board. The procedure followed under that board would be the same as followed in the regular procedures, which wouldn't be an appeal to the courts. But this Mineral Assessment Appeal Board would be separate in part. In considering some of the arguments advanced there, that board hasn't been set up; it will be a board set up separately. However, it wouldn't have the expertise that does exist presently in the Energy Conservation Resources Board, so it was decided to go with that. Then, after consultation with industry and discussions with the Energy Resources Conservation Board, it was decided that in the first instance their assessor would follow the general principles and guidelines that would be set down for assessing the fair actual value. From that there was a feeling there should be an appeal, and that appeal would go to the members of the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and it is from that situation that the difficult problem arises of where do you appeal after the Energy Resources Conservation Board had made their decision.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Now as recognized in setting up procedures like this, and being the first year, there may be some difficulties and some things that we can't always foresee in this whole question. I think that was one of the basic reasons why it was suggested the committee of cabinet initially do this, because if some suggestions arose they could handle it and carry out some of the clarification that might be necessary, if it was necessary, some of the other aspects on which a company might appeal. In other words, we were trying to foresee all the areas in which a company might wish to appeal further from the decisions of the Energy Resources Conservation Board.

As an alternative, of course, there was an appeal to the courts or an appeal to another board, but again that would present many more problems, inasmuch as some of the members in the industry expressed the concern that if it did go to the courts, the courts weren't really familiar with the technical

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aspects of determining reserves, so that presented a difficult situation for the courts. If you set up another separate board to appeal to, then again that wouldn't remedy the situation because perhaps the people on the Energy Resources Conservation Board more qualified than any of the people on the separate board would be to work out the details of the assessment.

Considering the technical aspect of it, and yet realizing that an assessment is being carried out by the board, the original assessment would be done by a representative of the Energy Resources Conservation Board and then an appeal would go to the board itself, it didn't give some independent person an opportunity to look at the appeal and see how it should be considered to make sure there was equity between the parties involved in these assessments.

So I think at this stage it was the feeling, in the first instance, that if there could be the appeal to the cabinet it might give industry the opportunity to say that if there was a grave injustice -- and again we didn't define in our policy statement, or we don't define in this bill, the grounds that you have to appeal from the Energy Resources Conservation Board to the cabinet.

There was some suggestion whether there would be hardship, but I think those of you who have experienced questions of hardship would realize that this is a very difficult phase to interpret, and certainly some of the appeal board decisions that I have read on the question of hardship indicate this is a difficult thing to determine. So in the policy statement itself there was no definition set as to what grounds or on what basis the company might wish to consider an appeal from the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Quite frankly, at this stage it is difficult to determine other than the question of their calculation of the reserves, and that again is a question of who might be in a position perhaps to consider the question of the reserves in light of the calculation; and then that would deal with the question of the formula that might be followed or carried out, the general questions of the principle of fair actual value, and the difficulty involved.

It was felt that there should be this appeal, and in the first instance it could go to the committee of cabinet, recognizing some of the difficulties that the hon. members have raised. And a thought I would like to express this afternoon would be that we would perhaps like to leave it this way for the first year, to see exactly what the situation is, what appeals might be forthcoming from the decisions of the Energy Resources Conservation Board, and then perhaps after we have had a chance to see the nature of those appeals, we might be in a better position to recommend how they should be properly held. I think at this stage it is a little difficult, in view of this first step, in trying to carry out the administration of this bill, to foresee exactly how these appeals should be carried out.

I might say to the hon. members that this question of appeals does cause me considerable concern because I sat on one of the committees of the legislature that considered administrative tribunals, and on that committee we dealt exhaustively with all the provisions for appeal and how they should be held for administrative tribunals. And this is one of the questions that you are continually faced with when you have administrative tribunals set up.

I might say that those who have experience in law have experienced the question of really what an appellate tribunal is and what it should do in carrying out its functions. You look at it a little differently than the normal person might when considering the question of an appeal to an independent board. I think myself that the proper function of an appeal or an appellate court is to look at the facts and see if there has generally been a miscarriage of justice. Certainly, in many cases, if there are extenuating circumstances they would perhaps come back and take a look at the facts that were brought out before the board and the decision that was made. If the decisions were made on a wrong principle, then I think the appellate tribunal would look with favour on overruling the board from which the decision was appealed.

But in considering those facts and looking at the situation where we are assessing crude oil in the first instance, this might not be the right approach to make sure that there is equity for all the parties involved, and I think that is basically what we are interested in. When the oil companies were being assessed and taxed there was a fair and equitable assessment with all the parties that were having their assessments considered. So it was with that kind of general thinking in the background that we recommend that the appeals be to the committee of cabinet.

Again I would like to conclude that aspect by asking the hon. members if they would consider that this might be a situation we could work out for this year, and then perhaps take a look at after we have some idea of the appeals.

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However, I recognize the points raised by the hon. members; it is a difficult one, and we will certainly give that further consideration on our side in the meantime.

Now one of the other hon. members raised the question of the option. Again, after we assessed and evaluated the various comments and opinions that have been made, one of the concerns expressed by a number of representatives in the industry, and particularly the organization named IPEC requested that they be given the option to elect to go under the new royalty schedule. They did that, and I think if I could summarize briefly, their arguments would be that some of the small independent oil companies did not have the necessary staff that would like to get involved in assessing their reserves. In other words, they did not want to be in a position where they were approaching the Energy Resources Conservation Board giving them all the technical information, then questioning whether or not they should consider an appeal of those decisions, and then become involved in the technical calculations of reserves. I think they advanced a very strong argument on that and the question came up as to whether we could give consideration to having the oil companies elect to go under the new royalty schedule.

Hon. members will recall that in many of the petroleum and natural gas leases the maximum royalty provision only applies to the first or primary term, and that under the policy statement we issued that after that period of time when that expired, then they would all be under the new royalty schedule. So with that in mind, if in some way we could work out a satisfactory option provision to do that, without detracting in any way from the revenue that we were looking at, we would give that consideration -- the view, of course, being that perhaps in the next review in five years, most of those leases then would not be subject to the maximum royalty provision and would all be under the new royalty schedule. And if a revision of royalties took place in five years then they would be in a position of not having the situation that faced us this year with the maximum royalty provision.

So we did work out an option clause and we announced we would proclaim The Mineral Taxation Act as of the first of January, and that the oil companies would have the option to elect to go under the new royalty schedule or under The Mineral Taxation Act. We then were put in a position that we could not assure those that were under The Mineral Taxation Act there would be a mill rate set for five years. We could only assure them under the new royalty schedule that the new royalty schedule would remain in force for five years.

The hon. members will recall we also attached in the policy statement that if a company was going to elect it would elect with all leases under its control. In other words, from an administrative point of view, one of the difficulties we could foresee would be to have some of the companies electing under the new royalty schedule and some under The Mineral Taxation Act. One of the serious problems from government's point of view was actually carrying out the administration. Could we administer some of the leases under The Mineral Taxation Act or some of the leases under the new royalty schedule? And after considering that problem it was felt that we could. We did set the January 1st deadline as the time to make that option.

After our policy statement on July 29th, industry then came back and we started to work on the actual regulations dealing with assessment and the regulations of the new royalty schedule. During the course of those negotiations industry presented the problems that they foresee -- whether they would be in a position to know if it was more advantageous to go under the new royalty schedule or to be under The Mineral Taxation Act. We advised them that we couldn't give them any assurance because we wouldn't be in a position to set the mill rate until after the assessment of all the reserves had been made; until the appeal time had expired and we knew exactly what the total assessment was, and then we would relate the total assessment to the \$70 million and strike a mill rate. Well, I think hon. members will recognize it wouldn't be possible to do this by January 1st so that the companies involved would be in a position to consider whether -- for other reasons -- they might consider electing to go under the new royalty schedule.

In view of that, Mr. Speaker, I might say that members of industry have now requested whether we could give consideration to making that election as of July 1st, with the idea that, after the assessment and the mill rate had been set, they could elect to go under the new royalty schedule and make the payments retroactively, or whether they would remain under The Mineral Taxation Act.

At the present time the government is giving consideration to the strong argument that has been advanced by industry. I might say that was one of the problems why initially January 1st was picked for the option because hon.

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members will appreciate that the revenue from royalties start approximately a month after the schedule would go into effect, and any later time there would be no assurance we would receive the revenue from the royalties. The only way that that could be done, of course, would be to make the royalty payments retroactive from July 1st on, and that is one argument that is being advanced. So I think that deals with the point raised by the hon. Member for Macleod dealing with the option clause.

The other point raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition dealt with the question of the regulations. The hon. members will recall that the royalty regulations themselves have been in force since 1962 and remained in effect until they were amended. The time expired on April 1st, and after the public hearing the decision was made to go on to the new royalty schedule for crude oil, so that a new royalty schedule with those regulations is being drafted at the present time. We've had numerous meetings with industry dealing with those regulations, and I would say we're just in the process now of being able to finalize them. At the same time of the appeals on regulations dealing with the new royalty schedule, there are also regulations dealing with the assessment procedure under The Mineral Taxation Act, and those dealt with the question of the formula that might be followed in respect to working out the fair actual value.

I say to the hon. members that since the announcement was made on July 29, the government and industry have been working together to try and come up with an acceptable formula. One of the difficulties, of course, is the question of legality -- to make sure that nothing in the regulations that will be submitted and approved by the cabinet would in any way jeopardize the legality of The Mineral Taxation Act. Of course, this deals with a very technical constitutional legal problem that's involved with the rights between the federal and provincial governments on this point. I'd like to finalize that by saying those regulations are in the final stages of preparation.

At the same time we are working on regulations that will be involved in the question of minerals other than crude oil, dealing with coal and salt and natural gas. We are working on regulations that will deal generally with those aspects too, so that the regulations can be dealt with at one time and the general format set, although the amount, certainly for natural gas, won't be set for some time.

One other interesting point that was raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Millican dealt with freeholders, and in considering that aspect, I'd like the hon. member to give consideration to the question that he raised dealing with the assessment of many of the freeholders -- and primarily I think his question dealt with what happens when they don't pay, and give them time to have some relief from forfeiture of their mineral rights. On that point I'd ask the hon. member to consider that it now appears that essentially this would only apply to producing areas -- if there is non-payment of tax for producing areas -- they would have some revenue coming in.

The hon. members will recall that The Mineral Taxation Act is so designed that it will cover the assessment of all acreage. Then there is an exemption provision, and the exemption part has been dealt with, the fair actual value of some \$5,000. If it is under \$5,000, it would be exempt from taxation. Then thinking in areas with the freeholders that it would primarily -- and I'm not saying it could in every case -- cover producing properties, so that for the period of time that is involved here they would have income coming in. The question is, if they give too long a term for the government to forfeit, with them having the income coming in, perhaps there was justification for shortening the time so that the government could get its money as soon as it could from this question of the non-payment. In other words, the people who would be involved in the freehold acreage, if they didn't pay under The Mineral Taxation Act, would still have income coming in and then the government would be justified, we would suggest, in moving in on a shorter period than normally if there was no income from the lease itself, before they exercised the forfeiture provisions.

[The motion carried, Bill No. 124 was read a second time.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I move that you do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole for consideration of certain bills on the Order Paper.

[The motion was passed without debate.]

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[Mr. Speaker left the Chair at 5:01 p.m.]

* * * * *
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

[Mr. Diachuk in the Chair.]

Bill No. 127
The Credit and Loan Agreement Amendment Act, 1972

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Members of the assembly, Bill No. 127, The Credit and Loan Agreement Amendment Act, 1972. I trust you have your copies of the amendments.

[Section 1 was agreed to; section 1.1 as amended was agreed to.]

[Sections 2 to 6 (2) were agreed to.]

Section 6.3

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to point out I see the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc is not present, but the amendment sheet number 2 that you should all have before you cover exactly the point that was dealt with when this bill was discussed during second reading. I imagine that is now to the satisfaction of the hon. member.

MR. STROM:

I was wondering before this amendment -- and I take the hon. member's explanation to heart -- because I don't have it with me but I know he was concerned about something. I was just trying to determine with my colleagues here what the amendment was. If it was answered, then that's fine. I knew there was some area in this particular section he was concerned with, but he didn't leave it with me.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Strom, you do have a copy of amendment no. 2?

MR. STROM:

I have it right now, but it is fine.

[The remainder of Section 6, Sections 7 and 8 were agreed to.]

Title and Preamble

MR. WILSON:

I have a couple questions to ask of the sponsor of the bill. In the last sentence of the notes under Section 5 it says 'lender' and I think it should be 'borrower'. I don't know whether it is important that the notes be accurate or not, but you may want to take cognizance of that.

I was wondering whether the sponsor would advise as to whether or not he considered limiting the liability of the merchant accepting the credit card if he hasn't been notified of the theft?

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, indeed, the hon. member is correct insofar as note 5 is concerned. That is a typographical error and should read, "The borrower is then unaware." However, that in no way affects the act. These are just notes to assist the members in discussing the bill.

Insofar as the second question is concerned, I'm not certain that I can speak definitely to what the procedure is between the issuer of the credit card and the merchant in all cases. However, I am assisted in replying by a letter that I just received today from an organization called Info-plan International. The letter is written by that organization on behalf of its client, Chargex. Interestingly enough they indicate -- perhaps I might read;

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Permit me to draw your attention to the attached recent Edmonton CP story that reached us via the Toronto Globe and Mail re credit card liability limits and the introduction of your bill in the Alberta House. My interest stems from work for my client, Chargex, who have espoused the suggestions now being proposed by you, in that they have, since 1968, when the Canadian Chargex Charge Card was introduced, limited card holder liability to a maximum of \$50 as long as the card holder notifies them of the loss within a reasonable time. I understand that all four participating banks take a very liberal view of the reasonable time clause.

Included with that letter was a brochure, which dealt with the plan in its entirety. One of the things that the brochure brought to my attention in dealing with the whole system was the services that it provides to the merchant. One of those services was, in fact, that the merchant was put in the position where he brings his credit card slips to the bank at the end of each business day. These are discounted to a certain extent, depending on the volume of business that the merchant does, and the average sale that the merchant concludes. But one of the benefits to the merchant is that he immediately gets cash value and that the bank suffers any loss that may be incurred by fraud, or by the fact that the person who charges doesn't pay. The merchant doesn't suffer that, so it isn't carried on to the merchant.

Unfortunately, we know that the relationship between many of the major oil companies and their dealers isn't on the same basis because they aren't independant merchants. They are really franchisees or lessees, and I don't know what the agreement is between those people. I can't help you there.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, another question to the sponsor of the bill. Now that it appears that we are going to have pictures on drivers' licences, did you consider legislation requiring pictures on all credit cards originating in Alberta of the bona fide person who is to use it? I'd like to know if you considered that, and why you rejected it if you did.

MR. KOZIAK:

I might point out that the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway brought that up during the discussions on second reading of the bill. The comment that I can make at this point is that it's a decision, I think, that the credit card issuer will have to make. I notice that the Chargex people have provided for, and require, the signature of the holder on the card that they issue. I imagine that they, having the same provision in the agreement as we would have in the act, are satisfied to live with the signature. Should the situation in this province and in Canada deteriorate to the point where credit card frauds increase, I would think that Chargex, of their own volition, would consider a picture in addition to, or in lieu of, the signature. I should think that that would have to be a decision of the people who issue the card. I don't think that we should force that decision onto them at this point.

MR. WILSON:

Mr. Chairman, one further question on the mechanics of the implementation of this. On the maximum amount of credit that is available to the card holder; is it a contract or will it be construed as a contract in regard to the maximum amount of credit when you get your statement and the company types on the statement "maximum amount of credit available is" x dollars, say a thousand dollars or something like that. Does that come into play or does it have to be a separate contract that you sign concerning your maximum amount of credit?

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, I may be misinterpreting the question. My feeling is that the question relates to the section as it stood at the time of second reading. This was one of the points raised by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc. If you look at the printed bill, it does indicate the maximum amount that is agreed to. However, amendment 2, which has been circulated, eliminates that reference, so that the statement reads, "The lesser of \$50 or the amount fixed or agreed to by the issuer as the maximum amount for which a person is liable." Those words change the printed form. It may be that the question you have put to me arises from the section as it was worded in the printed form. If I am wrong, perhaps you can correct me.

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MR. WILSON:

I'm not suggesting that the hon. member is wrong, Mr. Chairman. I would just like further elaboration on the mechanics of carrying this out. What constitutes agreement between the issuer and the recipient of the credit card? Does the recipient sign a statement that he agrees to the maximum amount, or is it agreement if he monthly receives a statement with the maximum amount typed on it?

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, the act in its present form and the bill in its present form in no way affect the maximum credit under the card. We are not legislating in that respect with this bill, with the act, or with the amendment. However, from the point of view of law, in the bill that was passed in the spring session, when we were dealing with unsolicited credit cards, it was indicated that the unsolicited credit card is not a binding contract unless the recipient of that card uses it. So there are two ways you can enter into a contract with respect to a credit card. Number one, via written application form accepted by the company or number two, by accepting the terms as issued when you use the card.

MR. WILSON:

Perhaps I could just explore it a little bit further, Mr. Speaker. On amendment No. 2 which was circulated, and I understand this is the final form now that is before us, it says: "The liability of the person whose name appears on the card shall not exceed the amount fixed or agreed to by the issuer as the maximum amount for which that person is liable in the event that it is lost," and so on. What constitutes agreement to that maximum amount? Does the recipient sign a statement initially, or can he have that maximum amount imposed upon him?

MR. KOZIAK:

Well, Mr. Chairman, as I indicated previously with respect to the card, if you receive a card in the mail and the card says right on it: "The cardholder is responsible for all indebtedness resulting from authorized use of this card and up to an aggregate maximum of \$50 from unauthorized use," that is the amount that is fixed or agreed to by the issuer. It is the issuer that we are concerned with. Now the issuer, when he sends this card to you, has fixed that amount or agreed to it. Now there are two ways of course of dealing with the credit card. There is receiving the card and using it; that forms a contract. Otherwise there is applying for a card and receiving it, and then the application form, combined with the card, forms the contract. But these would be probably the most common examples of how the maximum amount is fixed or agreed to by the issuer.

DR. BUCK:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to relate an interesting story to members of the House. It just points out the liability of \$50. One New Year's Eve -- it was about 40 below as it does get in this country once in a while -- I left my car running. A young fellow went into the glove compartment and stole my credit cards, and I am sure that the hon. members know that sometimes cards can be gone for weeks without you using them, but in this case the young man used the credit card twice. When the attendant asked, "What is your licence number?", he just picked one out of the air and scrawled a signature, and that was it. Fortunately, about four days later, he got picked up still celebrating New Year's Eve, and they went through his effects and he happened to have my credit cards, so I got them back. So anyway, when I got the bill from the oil company I sent them a notice saying: "Now I am quite willing to pay the \$21 because I didn't report the card as being stolen but though your attendant had not gone out and looked at the licence plate, and it had Dr. Buck on it, and the kid was 16 (I didn't think he was able to graduate even in dentistry by the age of 16) I will pay, but I am a little unhappy about the people who are rendering the service for you." I got a note back from them saying "Forget about it, we have got liability insurance to cover this". So this is just a little aside for the people who are concerned that maybe they will have to pay the first \$50. It usually doesn't happen.

MR. STROM:

A further clarification. It was my understanding from the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc that he was concerned about a stated amount being in the bill and that there were some cases where no amount of money was considered as a liability if a card was lost. It is my understanding that 3 (b) does in fact

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say that, it will be the amount agreed upon. In other words, if it is nothing, that is fine, then they are not tied by a sum stated in the act. Am I right in that assumption?

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, the concern of the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc if you look at the printed form of the bill stems from the wording in section 6 of the bill, clause 15.21, subsection (b) and then subsection (a) states: "\$50 or the maximum amount of credit available to him under a written agreement with the issuer." The hon. member rightly posed the alternative interpretation of those words to mean that, if under your agreement with Chargex, let's say, you are limited to a \$1000 of credit, that that act as it read in the printed form would mean that not the \$50 maximum for a lost card would take precedence but the \$1000 credit limit would take precedence, which was not the intention when the bill was introduced. This is why the change was made, to make sure there was no misunderstanding as to which maximum was in mind in the event of a lost card.

[The title and preamble were agreed to without debate.]

MR. KOZIAK:

Mr. Chairman, I move, seconded by the hon. Member for Stettler that the bill be reported as amended.

[The motion was carried without debate.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I move that we rise and report and beg leave to sit again.

[The motion was carried without debate.]

* * * * *

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MR. DIACHUK:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole Assembly has had under consideration the following bill: Bill No. 127, and begs to report same, with some amendments, and begs leave to sit again.

[The motion was carried.]

MR. HYNDMAN:

I move the amendments be read a second time

[The motion was carried.]

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might revert to Orders of the Day to answer a question that affected the Bureau of Public Affairs?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MR. GETTY:

Mr. Speaker, there were some questions today about whether federal election candidates were on the payroll of the government during the recent federal election campaign. One of the members asked if the hon. Premier was aware that Mr. Joe Clark was, in fact, on the government payroll during the election campaign. The hon. Premier said he was sure that was not the case, but he would check into it and advise the questioner.

I would like to confirm again that no federal candidate worked for the Government of Alberta during the recent election campaign. But since Mr. Clark's name was mentioned, Mr. Speaker, I checked into any contract work that he may have done for the government and I notice that the partnership of Clark & Samus was among a group of five outside consultants who helped prepare some

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brochure materials for the Bureau of Public Affairs to be used in the government's economic mission to Japan. We understand that the amount received by Mr. Clark through the partnership was approximately \$1700 and the work was done during the summer, not during a federal election campaign. As a matter of fact Mr. Clark was specifically advised if and when an election was called he would no longer be considered for his creative writing services.

MR. HYNDMAN:

Mr. Speaker, before we call it 5:30 I would like to advise the House that tonight we will commence committee study of Bill No. 2, The Individual Rights Protection Act beginning at 8:00 o'clock.

I move, seconded by the hon. Attorney General we call it 5:30 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER:

Having heard the motion for amending the clock, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House stands adjourned until 8:00 o'clock this eve

[The House rose at 5:23 p.m.]